GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:148
ANSWERED ON:18.02.2009
NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH POLICY
Manoj Dr. K.S.

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to formulate a National Mental Health Policy in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the salient features of policy;

(c) whether the Government also proposes to impart training for doctors to deal with the patients suffering from mental health problems;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to reduce the increasing incidents of suicide cases in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (e): National Health Policy, 2002 covers policy relating to Mental Health. In line with this policy, the Central Government is implementing National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) under which efforts are being made to provide mental health services as a part of general health system. In this regard, Central Government supplements the State Governments' efforts through District Mental Health Programme (DMHP), upgradation of psychiatric wings of Govt. medical colleges/general hospitals and strengthening/ modernisation of State run mental hospitals to make them as therapeutic units. The Central Government has proposed to re-strategise the National Mental Health Programme during the 11th Five Year Plan to extend DMHP to more districts in the country with added components of suicide prevention services, work place stress management, life skills training and counselling in schools and colleges.

To address the acute shortage of qualified mental health professionals in the country, manpower development schemes under the NMHP for setting up of centres of excellence in mental health and PG training departments in mental health specialties are under active consideration. Training is also being provided to medical officers and health staff to implement the Programme. It has been proposed to intensify training using standard training modules both in terms of duration and frequency.